

time. He continues to be a very important friend to me. I am very grateful for that friendship. I join Senator MURRAY in commending our staff. But, first of all, I think I should mention my appreciation for the majority leader, BILL FRIST; and HARRY REID, the Democratic leader, for giving us the latitude and the authority to manage this bill on the floor of the Senate for the Committee on Appropriations to help ensure that every Senator had an opportunity to speak and offer amendments, to be a part of the passage of this bill in every sense of the word. We appreciate the leaders giving us that authority and for not trying to manage the bill from their offices. I really appreciate that.

Also, I have to commend the staff members on our side: Keith Kennedy, staff director, who has been working in the Senate for the Appropriations Committee for a good many years. He has a lot of experience. He is a person of great integrity, and I am very fortunate that he has agreed to serve as staff director of this committee and continue to provide guidance and supervision for all of the members of the staff of the Committee on Appropriations.

We are very proud of all of the staff. Those who have been particularly helpful to me during the handling of this bill, in addition to Keith, include Clayton Heil, our counsel for the committee, who has been on the floor of the Senate for much of the handling of the bill; Les Spivey, who is also a member of the full committee staff, he does a good job as well. I guess you could say he is our token Mississippian who is on the first team of the committee staff.

Terry Sauvain has been someone with whom I have enjoyed working for a number of years. He has worked closely with Senator BYRD for a good many years. We appreciate Terry's continued good assistance, particularly in the handling of this bill.

Chuck Keiffer and Peter Rogoff—Peter works for Senator MURRAY on the committee staff and has a lot of experience. He has been very helpful to us as we have managed this bill in the Senate.

I thank David Schiappa, Laura Dove, and Jodie Hernandez. They have been at the desk keeping up with all of the amendments, colloquies, and order of business, and keeping people advised through cloakroom telephones and answering Member's questions when they come onto the Senate floor. They go to that spot and ask for the pending business or what the order of amendments may be. They have been absolutely professional and diligent and helpful in every way.

On the Democratic side, I thank Marty Paone and Lula Davis for helping to keep up with things for the Democrats and helping to provide advice and counsel to all of us who have been involved in the handling of this bill. We are deeply grateful for their assistance.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that at 2:15 today, the Senate proceed to executive session for consideration en bloc of the following nominations: No. 617, Brian Cogan, to be U.S. district judge for the Eastern District of New York; No. 618, Thomas Golden, to be U.S. district judge for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania.

I further ask consent that the following Senators then be recognized to speak: Senator SPECTER for 5 minutes; Senator LEAHY for 5 minutes; Senator SANTORUM for 5 minutes. Further, following the use or yielding back of time, the Senate proceed to votes on the confirmation of the nominations in the order listed above; provided that following the votes, the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action and the Senate resume legislative session.

Mrs. MURRAY. There is no objection on the Democratic side.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. ALEXANDER. On behalf of the leader, I ask unanimous consent that there now be a period of morning business with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I be allowed to speak for up to 10 minutes in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator is recognized for 10 minutes.

RECITING OR SINGING STATEMENTS OF NATIONAL UNITY IN ENGLISH

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I am here today because I may have misunderstood the actions on the other side of the aisle. Something rather surprising has occurred. It would appear from their actions that my colleagues in the Democratic Party seem to believe that we ought to sing the national anthem, say the Pledge of Allegiance, and take the oath of citizenship in this country in something other than our common language, English.

Here is why I say that. On Monday, along with several other Senators, I introduced a very simple resolution, a resolution affirming that statements of national unity, especially the Pledge of Allegiance and the national anthem, ought to be recited or sung in our common language, English. That is all it says.

Let me read the relevant part of the resolution. It says:

Now, therefore, be it Resolved, that the Senate affirms that statements or songs that symbolize the

unity of the Nation, including the National Anthem, the Oath of Allegiance sworn by new United States citizens, and the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States, should be recited or sung in English, the common language of the United States.

This is not a resolution about what we are free to do in the United States; this is about what we ought to do in the United States. It is very straightforward. It does not infringe on anyone's right to free speech, or prohibit translation. It does not say Americans should not learn a second language. In fact, I encourage our children to learn a second language or even a third language to better compete in this global economy.

The resolution does say that we believe that we Americans ought to recite the pledge and sing "The Star-Spangled Banner" and other statements and songs that unite us as a Nation in the language that unites us as a Nation, English.

Last Monday, every Senate office received a request for the resolution to be passed by unanimous consent. I would not expect this resolution to just be bipartisan, I would expect it to easily be unanimous. That request was agreed to by every Republican, but on the other side someone objected.

Should I assume that the Democratic side objected because they believe we Americans should, at least some of the time, sing our national anthem in Spanish or some other foreign language? Do they believe we should recite the Pledge of Allegiance in Chinese, which is the second most spoken foreign language in the United States?

This is important. It is important enough that we inscribed in this Chamber, above the Presiding Officer, our original motto for this country: "One from many." It is not "Many from one." Our greatest accomplishment as a country is not our diversity, which is a magnificent achievement; our greatest accomplishment is we have taken all of this diversity and made it into one country. And we have a few things that unite us: our common history, the principles of our founding documents, and our common language. If we should lose that, we would be a United Nations, not the United States of America.

This is important because this is the emotion which underlies most of the immigration debate we are having. The concern among many Americans, other than the rule of law which has to do with securing the border, is to make sure that those who come to our country become Americans. And we do not do that by race, we do not do that by ethnicity, we do not do that by what country an immigrant comes from, we do it by a few simple uniting ideas: our founding documents, our common history, and our common language.

This has been true for a long time in our country. When a legal immigrant comes to the United States—and this has been the law for 100 years—and he or she applies to become a citizen, he